

**HANFORD REACH NATIONAL MONUMENT
FEDERAL PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Summary: Session # 19
Thursday, August 26, 2004
Washington State University Tri-Cities
Consolidated Information Center, Rooms 120 & 120A
Richland, WA**

The Hanford Reach National Monument Federal Planning Advisory Committee met on Thursday, August 26, 2004 at the Washington State University Tri-Cities Consolidated Information Center in Richland, Washington.

The purpose of the meeting was (1) to discuss and provide recommendations on opportunities to take the Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated Environmental Impact Statement (CCP/EIS) to the public; and (2) to discuss and provide recommendations regarding long-term elk herd management.

Welcome and Introductions

Greg Hughes, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) Designated Federal Official (DFO), Hanford Reach National Monument, opened the meeting at 9:30 a.m., and welcomed Committee members, the public and other attendees. Mr. Hughes briefed the Committee on their advice letter from Session #18, and gave an overview of the process for the Planning Team to continue integrating Committee advice into writing the Draft CCP/EIS. He turned the meeting over to the Committee Chair, Jim Watts.

Mr. Watts asked Alice Shorett, facilitator, to review the agenda. Ms. Shorett reviewed with the Committee the purpose of the meeting and described the process for hearing presentations on opportunities to take the Draft CCP/EIS to the public, as well as on long-term elk herd management. She added that the Committee would be providing recommendations on these two topics during the meeting.

Jim Watts, Committee Chair, reviewed the public comment process and reminded those making public comment that there was a five-minute time limit, unless augmented by the Committee. He stated that the public comment period was scheduled just prior to the lunch break. He noted that the Committee was anticipating a lot of public comment, and that there was a public comment sheet available at the sign in table for those interested in giving comment. He also reviewed the Committee's purpose and charter.

Meeting Minutes from Session #18

Mr. Watts asked the Committee for any changes to the summary from Session #18. The Committee approved a motion to adopt the meeting summary, as drafted.

Action: Committee members adopted the meeting summary from Session #18 as drafted.

Discussion on Opportunities for Release of the Draft CCP/EIS to the Public

Paula Call, Outdoor Recreation Planner for the Service at the Monument, addressed the Committee. She explained that once the Planning Team had completed writing the Draft Plan, and once the Service had completed all the necessary internal, inter-agency and government-to-government reviews, the Service would be taking the Draft CCP/EIS out to the public. Under National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements, they must allow at least a 30-day comment period, although they are looking at providing between 45-90 days for comment on this Plan.

Ms. Call described to the Committee the strategies outlined in the Service's Public Involvement Plan for the Monument. Some strategies recommended in that plan include periodic briefings with various advisory and other stakeholder groups, such as the Hanford Advisory Board, Oregon Waste Board, Rotary, and any other groups that make a request for presentation about the Plan. Additionally, the Monument staff currently has a mailing list of over 800 individuals that will receive a notice saying the Plan is available for public review. As required by NEPA, the Service will also advertise the Notice of Availability of the Plan in the *Federal Register*.

One Committee member asked whether the Service was planning to hold any public meetings for review and comment on the Draft CCP/EIS. Ms. Call responded by saying that they are not required to do so by law, but if the Committee thought that would be important and wanted to make that recommendation to the Service, that would be very helpful in planning for release of the Draft Plan. Additionally, Ms. Call requested that if the Committee felt public meetings were important, that they also indicate what type of meeting should take place, such as a public open house like was conducted during the scoping phase versus a public presentation and testimony format.

The Committee discussion focused on the importance of scheduling public meetings as was done during the public scoping phase, including meetings on Eastern Washington and Western Washington. The Committee suggested that the Service hold meetings in different locations and that part of the meeting should be a presentation to the attendees highlighting some of the important elements of the Draft Plan. Otherwise, the open house format provides an opportunity to interact with the Monument staff and ask questions. The Committee suggested that a draft plan be made available to the public for review prior to public meetings, in hard copy, CD's and on the web.

Action: The Committee approved a motion to recommend that in addition to the other strategies outlined in the Monument's Public Involvement Plan, the Service should hold public meetings in various locations in the State. The public meetings should be in open house format with presentations from the Service and opportunity for public testimony

Presentations on Elk Management and Herd Data

Mr. Watts explained to the Committee members that the purpose of this topic on the agenda was to hear presentations of factual material regarding elk management and herd data. He said the intention of the presentations was to give everyone on the Committee the same information for purposes of discussion on recommendations later in the meeting. He asked Ms. Shorett to facilitate the session.

Ms. Shorett addressed the Committee saying there would be three presentations: the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), the US Fish and Wildlife Service and a Committee member. The latter was a response to a request that all Committee member seats received from Triangle Associates for any presentation material of factual information on long-term elk herd management and herd data. Only one Committee seat member responded with a desire to present information.

Ms. Shorett also confirmed that the purpose of this topic was to hear information regarding the facts of elk herd data and management. She reiterated that the Committee would have an opportunity to discuss the material later in the meeting in preparing formal recommendations to the Service and US DOE.

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Mr. Watts asked Dave Ware and Captain Chuck Kohls from Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to present their material to the Committee (Attachment A). Mr. Ware started by presenting information regarding elk biology. He explained that the herd was established through natural colonization in the winter of 1972-73, at less than 10 animals. Initially, the migration range outside of non-Hanford lands was minimal, but as the population grew, so did the range. Formal studies and monitoring have been conducted on this herd for over 20 years, making them the most studied herd in Washington. He explained that these animals are well-adapted to the desert environment, and that many factors have contributed to the continual growth in herd size over the years.

Mr. Ware described the effect people have had on the herd. Over the years, few animals have been culled from the herd. Those that are culled are usually bull elk. While these animals are huge trophy animals, studies indicate that taking cow elk has the greatest effect on mitigating population expansion. Current harvest levels do not even come close to approaching annual recruitment of the herd.

Mr. Ware then described the impact elk have on the habitat and on people. Mr. Kohls then explained some management tools for controlling the population in response to the social pressures from elk herd damage. Most notably, the elk are causing serious problems on agricultural lands adjacent to the Monument, where landowners have the opportunity to submit depredation payments to the State in return for crop damage.

The Committee members asked questions of clarification. One Committee member asked about the opportunity to open other public lands to more elk hunting that are now land-locked by private ownership. One Committee member asked about the various management tools for population control, such as trapping and relocating or culling versus other methods of population management such as hazing. Mr. Ware responded that the State has been active in hazing the animals over the last few years via airplane and/or vehicles. Generally, this has been less expensive than other methods of population control. However, they are not yet fully aware of any unintended consequences of hazing the animals off private lands.

In response to a question on the carrying capacity of the herd on the Arid Lands Ecology (ALE) Reserve on the Monument, Mr. Ware indicated that WDFW has never conducted a carrying capacity analysis. The reason is the agency manages for social and habitat needs, not just habitat needs. The current target population number in the State's elk herd management plan was arrived at in negotiated sessions among various stakeholders considering several factors and adopted in the State's elk herd management plan.

In response to a question about the concentration of claims payments on the southwest border of the ALE, Mr. Ware responded by saying it was really a matter of timing based on crop variety. The commodities surrounding the border of the ALE range from dry-land wheat to irrigated fields to orchards. As the animals migrate around the range, they travel by season depending on vegetation availability, and tend to take refuge in the Monument lands during the hunting seasons, coming out in the evening to forage on available crops.

US Fish and Wildlife Service

Mr. Watts asked Dave Smith, Natural Resources Specialist and Michael Ritter, Deputy Project Manager from the USFWS Monument to address the Committee. Mr. Smith started by explaining similar information on biology and data (Attachment B). He stated that the Service had only been collecting herd data on Monument lands for approximately four years, while the US DOE and WDFW had been working with this herd for nearly thirty years. However, in that small amount of time, Mr. Smith has noticed behavioral changes in the animals in response to population control and management actions. Mr. Smith also explained that the herd winter counts generally represent 86% of the total herd population.

Mr. Smith described the herd survey methodologies that have been used in the past, and some on-going activities in a technical working group to continue to refine and improve those methodologies. Joint surveys between the WDFW and Service will begin in the fall of 2004. All information in the surveys will be incorporated into the WDFW state-wide population model.

Mr. Smith then took the Committee through a pictorial tour of the ALE today to demonstrate current herd impact on the ecology. He explained that the overall impact on the environment depends on the weather. Currently, the region has had above-average precipitation, which helps to minimize impact on vegetation and soils caused by the herd's migration. While trailing is evident on the ALE, the Service is not seeing the wide swaths of migration corridors that they may see in drier conditions.

Using the same presentation (Attachment B), Mr. Ritter then described to the Committee what commitments the Service made at the Elk Summit held in Prosser, Washington on April 5-6, 2004. At the end of the Summit, attended by some Committee members and other stakeholders such as Native Americans, landowners, land management agencies, and regional governments, each participant group made commitments to address the elk population issue. The Service made seven commitments that they have either fully implemented or are actively addressing.

Mr. Smith finished the presentation by explaining to the Committee some tools the Service is considering for long-term elk herd population control and management. Currently, the Draft CCP/EIS addresses population control as needed, based on scientific resource management data.

Population control is used to reduce population that threaten shrub-steppe and riparian integrity; threaten other wildlife populations; threaten human health and safety; or threaten the integrity of adjacent non-federal lands. Some of the tools available to the Service include trapping and relocating, government cull, controlled hunt, natural predation, hazing and immunocontraception.

Conservation/Environment Seat Member

Mr. Watts then asked Rick Leaumont to address the Committee. Mr. Leaumont explained that he was addressing the Committee as part of his commitment from the Elk Summit to gather and research damage claims data. He started by showing a map of the damage claims from 2002, the most recent year data is available (Attachment C). He compared those with claims from 1999, 2000 and 2003, explaining that no claims were received from 2001. Mr. Leaumont described for the Committee the relationship of the response in herd size to harvest totals. Mr. Leaumont also presented data to the Committee on the relationship to total damage claims payments with respect to hours and resources spent on hazing the animals off of private lands, concluding that the increase in hazing resulted in decreased damage claims. He concluded by reminding the Committee that the Draft CCP/EIS supports population control measures across all alternatives.

One Committee member asked for clarification on the damage done to habitat and adjacent lands as a result of hazing, versus any damage as a result of hunting activities, both by the elk and the persons engaged in those activities. Dave Ware from WDFW responded that quantifying any damage as a result of population control and management activities is a difficult task. However, he added that any activities conducted need to be supported by sound scientific analysis. Dave Smith from the Service added that hazing activities can cause immediate damage, but that wildlife naturally meander across the landscape in its migration and on a landscape scale the biological disturbance is fairly minimal.

Public Comment

Jim Watts asked those that had signed up for public comment to step up to the microphone. He noted that each individual or group was limited to five minutes. He also reminded everyone that written comments may be submitted at any time to the Service at the Monument office.

Bob Wilson – Citizen

He heard a lot of good comments in the discussion throughout the morning. If the goal of elk herd management is crop reduction control, then hunting on ALE is counter-productive to that goal. One thing he did not hear on the list of options for long-term population control is a physical barrier. He recommends that be put on the list as something to be considered. A one-time investment of an elk fence that could last 10-15 years versus crop damage payment of \$200,000 in one year could be a pretty good investment.

Another thing about hunting, he hopes that any discussion of hunting is not too far in front of the planning process, and suggested that any consideration of hunting be taken in context. Elk management is just one issue in the entire planning process for the Hanford Reach National Monument. Any consideration of hunting out of context is considered an exclusive use, when in fact this is not an issue of access for hunters; it is an issue of access, period. There are a lot of other users to consider. However, each use requires its own support that the management

agencies will need to consider. For example, if we open up the Monument to hunting, there is a lot that goes along with that. Would we need to improve different kinds of access? Will there need to be roads? Will there be ATV use? Do we have ADA access issues? He heard the mention of fire danger and the increase that comes along with hunting. He has years of experience with increased fire danger through his positions with the US Forest Service and studies on forest and wildlife management. He asked that all of this be considered in the context of the entire planning process, and thanked the Committee for their time.

Michele Gerber – B Reactor Museum Association

The Committee has in the past taken action and sent a letter with regard to B Reactor. Currently, there is a contract out for bid with US DOE that is expected to be awarded this winter calls for B Reactor to go into the demolition (cocooning) process in October 2006. The B Reactor Museum Association has just two short years to culminate its efforts to preserve the Reactor. With that in mind, they are hosting a very special event this October 9, 2004, commemorating the 60th anniversary of the start of B Reactor.

It is a public event with several public opportunities, and there will be a large advertisement indicating so in this Sunday's newspaper. She wanted to let the Committee know of the events in advance. There will be at least seven bus tours going to the Reactor. Many people in the community have never visited the Reactor. As of this morning, all of the buses were full, with the exception of 27 seats. Anyone really wanting to partake in the tour should sign up today. The way to do that is to call (509) 372-9628.

Also, there will be jet boat tours up the Reach from Richland, and cruise boat tours down the Reach, through the Tri-Cities. There will be an exhibit that afternoon at the Richland Community Center from the State's Historic Preservation Office, the National Park Service, the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation, the US Fish and Wildlife Service; another exhibit from the B Reactor Museum Association, and others that will be available all that afternoon. Starting at 4:00 p.m. that afternoon will be a wine reception at the Community Center, sponsored by one of the Hanford contractors, and at 6:00 p.m. a major dinner with distinguished visitors, including Richard Roads as the keynote speaker. He is a nationally-recognized author on atomic history, who has agreed to come here to speak and reduce his speaking fee down to one-third his normal fee, because he feels so strongly about preservation of the Reactor.

Roy Gephart – PNNL/AASTA

Mr. Gephart said he was addressing the Committee in two capacities: first, as a project manager for PNNL, and second, as a citizen involved in some of the public outreach activities located on the ALE. In that context, he is not speaking for or against hunting. He wants to give some information to consider in the Committee's discussion about hunting. Using the map, Mr. Gephart showed the Committee the area of the ALE that concerns his work, entering through gate 106 onto the ALE. From this point, his work goes either to the NIKE site located next to the Service garage, or to the summit of Rattlesnake Mountain where the observatory is located.

His input into the discussion is for the Committee to consider issues of safety, primarily to ensure that any hunting takes place outside of the gun range of any activities currently located on the ALE. They have students, researchers and other university personnel that are in that

southeastern portion of the ALE on a seven-day-a-week, 24-hours a day basis. We need to make sure that this portion of ALE is outside the range of any hunting, and beyond where any bullets would fly injuring personnel or equipment.

In addition, in cooperation with the Service, PNNL does have on-going research on ALE in the subjects of national security, geology, hydrology, biology and others. There are other personnel outside of this range that are conducting on-going research activities, as well, that would need cooperation and coordination with hunters when there are elk out on the ALE. Finally, he supports having sound scientific information that drives sound management actions on the Monument. He would like the Committee to consider that in order to understand what happens on a landscape, we need to have information to analyze over a long period of time.

Ken Swanson – Rattlesnake Mountain Observatory

He is Chief Astronomer of the Rattlesnake Mountain Observatory. Within the dome facility of the observatory, they have thousands of dollars worth of equipment. The telescope and associated equipment is worth upwards of a million dollars. He is not speaking for or against hunting on ALE. His concern is the safety of the people working at the observatory, and the equipment associated with those operations.

It just takes one stray bullet to penetrate the walls of the dome and do thousands of dollars of damage, or worse injure someone. Even though their objective is enable the remote access to the observatory, they will still require personnel access for maintenance and other needs. Due to the nature of the work, this access is necessary on a 24-hour-a-day basis. One stray bullet could put someone's life at risk. They also have a significant amount of communications equipment on some of the outbuildings. His business is the safety of the equipment and personnel, and access to the observatory, not the hunting issue.

Larry Cadwell – Citizen

He was a little surprised there were not more alternatives and issues being considered in the Draft CCP/EIS. When he looks at the issue of elk on the ALE, he sees a number of losers. He sees WDFW as a loser, because they are spending a lot of its resources on a single issue. If any of the half million dollars came from the General Fund, then taxpayers are losers. The habitat itself is a loser. Several PNNL scientists some years ago documented the impact the herd had on the surrounding habitat. Last but not least, the ranchers adjacent to the ALE are losing by getting a lot of damage to their crop, and associated financial losses.

In an effort to turn this around into a win-win situation for everyone, he made a suggestion. He knows the Service has options and alternatives for bringing people into the ALE to support issues that they favor. For example, the Audubon has been in doing surveys, volunteers have come in to move fences and help with other maintenance work, and possibly other activities of which he is not aware.

He is suggesting that there are opportunities to bring people into the ALE, so is proposing public hiking days. These public hiking days might just coincide with the hunting season, and people might be required to wear a bright orange vest, not carry any kind of a weapon, may be required to carry something like a cell phone or GPS unit, and have to sign up indicating they have been

allowed to do this by the Service. If there are concerns about fire danger, they would not need to allow the activity since this is a discretionary action by the Service.

He submits to the Committee that the elk cannot tell the difference between a hiker and a hunter. The hikes will be planned ahead of time and coordinated with any hunting activities. He summarized by saying he was surprised at the brevity of the list of options for management. He hates to say “think outside the box,” but here is a real opportunity to do just that.

Max Benitz – Benton County Commissioner

He distributed copies to the Committee, and explained that the Commissioners recently passed a resolution requesting the Service to work with WDFW to implement the elk herd management plan. Additionally, he distributed a letter from the Yakima County Board of Commissioners advocating the same approach. This plan was developed in 1999, and includes a lot of options. Trapping, hazing and other management aspects are identified in the plan. WDFW put this plan together and nothing has been done by the Service to implement it. He encourages Committee members to read the plan.

He read a quote from the Proclamation when the Monument was established that reads, “Nothing in this proclamation shall be deemed to enlarge or diminish the jurisdiction of the State of Washington with respect to fish and wildlife management,” signed by William Jefferson Clinton. He encouraged the Committee to read the Proclamation. Wildlife, fish and shellfish are the property of the State, as per the RCW. The Service’s own mission statement says hunting is an important tool in wildlife management. Hunting gives resource managers a valuable tool to control the population of some species that might otherwise exceed the carrying capacity and the habitat and well-being of other wildlife species. Other sites in Washington owned by the Service have hunting. This is an allowed activity.

Other aspects need to be considered by the Committee when considering long-term elk herd management. This also needs to be a high priority of the Committee. We have a crisis going on and nobody is addressing the issue. The CCP will be implemented long after the crisis explodes. Understanding that various entities made commitments at the Elk Summit in Prosser in April, none of the list of seven commitments have been accomplished by the Service. The Service needs to be responsible for these elk. They need to be held liable. The elk plan needs to be implemented. Benton County has safety issues it is trying to address. He finished by urging the Committee to support the Benton County resolution.

Everett Hamilton – Rattlesnake Hills landowner

He started by saying that he was amazed there was no representation of landowners sitting around the table. The point he wanted to make was that this year, during the annual meeting with WDFW, it was the first time in his life he had seen a group of 35 landowners come to consensus on an issue. The issue they agree on is that they are sick of the elongated hunting seasons. The liberalized hunting seasons of recent past have resulted in over 180 days of trespassers on their property.

They are not going to put up with the elongated hunting seasons and trespassers. The elk have become very adaptive when looking at 150 headlights coming up a county road that usually has

no more than one car at a time. In thinking outside of the box, he has a suggestion for resolution on the issue. He would like to see consideration of a new Public Lands Wildlife Area (PLWA) to include adjacent private landowners. The State is starting to talk about new PLWA laws for next year.

He would like to see US DOE properties, Service-managed properties and landowner properties all form into one PLWA that would include management of elk and other wildlife. The landowners would have control over when hunters are there. He guarantees that 2 hunters hunting for 100 days would get way more elk than 200 hunters hunting for one day. Everyone needs to work together as neighbors to come up with a cooperative solution, and think outside of the box.

The landowners are fed up with the problem. Hunters will show up on your doorstep at all hours of the night saying they are there to take care of the landowners' problem. In fact, this year you will see that some of the properties shown on the map earlier in the meeting where some of the harvest occurred last year will be closed down this year. He wanted to present the idea that things are changing and landowners are going to be a part of that change.

Merle Johnson – Citizen

He addressed the Committee as a citizen, but he came out to the area in 1993, and one of the big reasons for staying here is because of ALE. He works for Benton County Noxious Weed Program. He has been fortunate to be out all over ALE. There are some serious problems out there with weed issues. Rush skeleton is a perennial that has no leaves and is very difficult to kill, and you have to use some pretty restrictive chemicals to do it. The County had been working on rush skeleton three years prior to the Service managing the lands, and were making some real progress with the weed. One of the problems with rush skeleton is when you get a burn, it comes back with a vengeance. You may see one plant above ground, but the root system spreads over a large area under ground. After a fire, you will see thirty more plants in the area. He has real concern with rush skeleton on ALE, because he knows how difficult it is to kill.

Diffuse knapweed is all over the County. This is something the Monument does not want, and neither do the farmers. You don't want it moved around by the animals. Russian knapweed is out there, and will produce a monoculture. In 1999, he was out on an elk trail that must have been 250 feet wide and ran for miles. In that path was a Russian knapweed. It was mowed down to bare ground. Whenever you get a bare ground situation, you open that up to invasive weeds. These animals are eating the weeds, taking the seeds, and distributing them widely. The 1200 road used to be a boundary of weeds. He has not been out there in three years, so is not familiar with how far they have moved up. The weeds and the elk go hand in hand.

The Service spent \$6.5 million recently cleaning up after the fire. That is pristine ground, and you take a drill and tractor out there to plant seed, he doesn't understand where the pristine ground went. If you want pristine ground, you have to be very careful about the weed control issues on ALE.

Jack Dawson – Citizen

He addressed the Committee regarding hunting on ALE. He understands it is not a simple problem, but does think there are some simple approaches. For example, mandating a cow elk only hunt will reduce the number of avid hunters trampling around on landowners' grounds. Purchasing some of the adjacent land may also help solve some of the property destruction. Hiring two cowboys to haze the animals back onto public property would be a cheap alternative, and they would be excited to go out on extended rides every other day.

Murrel Dawson – Citizen

Ms. Dawson submitted written public comment (Attachment D).

Jim Watts thanked everyone for their comments. He prepared the Committee for the afternoon discussion prior to the lunch break by summarizing what the Committee was considering. The Service is managing for population control, using all the tools in their basket to do so. He encouraged representatives from WDFW and the Service to get together during lunch to prepare a statement for the Committee identifying where they agree, and where they do not, so the Committee can help reconcile the issue in advice to the Service.

Discussion and Recommendations on Long-term Elk Herd Management

After lunch break, Mr. Watts reconvened the Committee to discuss the presentations from the morning session and to formulate the Committee's recommendation on long-term elk herd management. He asked the Service and WDFW to present to the Committee their joint statement regarding long-term elk herd management. Jeff Tayer explained to the Committee that WDFW and the Service got together during lunch and developed the three following recommendation for addressing elk herd population control:

- Elk should be addressed specifically in the CCP/EIS for population control;
- Population goals should be set by the State's elk herd management plan; and
- A full range of options should be described in the CCP/EIS and available to the Service in making management decisions.

The Committee entered into discussion on the topic. Many Committee members felt it was important for the Service to establish cooperative working relationships with the US DOE, WDFW and adjacent landowners to address the issue. Additionally, Committee members were reminded that valid existing and treaty rights need to be taken into account in developing any plan for long-term management of the elk herd.

The Committee also focused their discussion on providing enough detail in the CCP/EIS for the public to be able to identify the pros and cons of the issue. A full range of options should be included in the CCP/EIS analysis. Including a full range of options will also facilitate getting adequate public comment on the issue.

A few Committee members voiced concern over the full range of tools described earlier in the meeting and presented by the USFWS (Attachment B). One Committee member stated that while he recognizes a controlled hunt as an effective management tool, he did not feel he could support the use of this tool on the ALE. At the same time, some Committee members expressed

concern that drive-trapping can also result in injury to the animals. Other Committee members emphasized the need to have all the tools available to the Service for controlling the population, including a controlled, government-sponsored hunt. The Committee further discussed the necessity to analyze all of the available tools for population control in the CCP/EIS versus eliminating or calling out specific population control management tools prior to the analysis.

Committee members moved the focus of their discussion to the damage on ALE due to the population itself versus the damage done due to any population control activities. One Committee member suggested that before any of the management agencies take action and can assess the effectiveness of that action, a carrying capacity analysis for the ALE needs to be conducted to establish a target population based on the available resources.

The Committee discussed adding language and additional recommendations to the three presented earlier by the Service and WDFW. Committee members suggested that treaty rights be acknowledged throughout the CCP/EIS; that the use of all tools for population control should be supported by the use of adaptive management to learn and revise management actions; and that the Service should work to establish cooperative relationships with the US Department of Energy, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and adjacent landowners regarding elk herd population management, and should contract with the WDFW for population control actions.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the full range of recommendations. The motion was amended to remove public hunting as one of the population control options on ALE. The vote failed with three Committee members in support of the amended motion. Another amended motion was made to suggest that a controlled hunt would be used on ALE only when all other population control measures have been exhausted. That motion also failed with two in support.

A final motion was made, seconded and approved to adopt the following recommendation on elk herd population control. The vote carried with eight in favor and two opposed (*For*: State, Counties, Native American, Economic Development, Utilities/Irrigation, Outdoor Recreation, Scientific/Academic, and Public-at-large; *Against*: Environment/Conservation, and K-12 Education; *Abstaining*: none).

The Committee recommends that the Service have all the population management tools that are available to professional wildlife managers. Each of these tools would be limited by the overriding need to protect the Arid Land Ecology Reserve resources and that the Service is guided by scientific principles.

Additionally, the Committee recommends the following:

- Elk should be specifically addressed in the CCP/EIS for population control;
- Population goals should be set by the State's elk herd management plan;
- The CCP/EIS should describe a full range of options for population control;
- Treaty rights must be acknowledged throughout the CCP/EIS;
- The use of all tools for population control should be supported by the use of adaptive management to learn and revise management actions; and

- The Service should work to establish cooperative relationships with the US Department of Energy, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and adjacent landowners regarding elk herd population management, and should contract with the WDFW for population control actions.

Summary and Next Steps

Mr. Watts asked Ms. Shorett to summarize the meeting proceedings. Ms. Shorett summarized the Committee discussion by saying that the Committee had passed two pieces of advice to the USFWS and USDOE. The first, a recommendation guiding the Service on a variety of ways to take the Draft CCP/EIS out to the public, and the second, a recommendation regarding elk herd population control and management.

Mr. Watts suggested that the Committee would have at least one more meeting prior to its sunset date of January 11, 2005. Triangle will work with the Service to identify the need for a meeting and work to secure a date. Mr. Hughes explained that the Planning Team continues to write and analyze in order to produce a Draft CCP/EIS by this fall. All Committee advice, government-to-government consultations and information from Cooperating Agency meetings will be incorporated into the Draft Plan.

Mr. Hughes again thanked everyone for coming and adjourned the meeting at 3:30 p.m.

Approved by:

Greg Hughes, DFO

Jim Watts, Chair

MEETING ATTENDANCE

Committee Seat	Member	Alternate
K-12 Education	Karen Wieda	
Cities		<i>vacant</i>
Conservation/Environmental	Rick Leaumont	Mike Lilga
Counties	Leo Bowman	Frank Brock
Economic Development	Jim Watts	Harold Heacock
Outdoor Recreation	Rich Steele	
Public-at-Large	Kris Watkins	
Scientific/Academic	Michele Gerber	
	Gene Schreckhise	<i>vacant</i>
State	Jeff Tayer	Ron Skinnarland
Native American	Rex Buck	<i>vacant</i>
Utilities/Irrigation	Nancy Craig	<i>vacant</i>
Designated Federal Official	Greg Hughes	

Participants and Invited Speakers

U.S. Department of Energy	Steve Wisness
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Michael Ritter
	David Smith
	Paula Call

Facilitators

Triangle Associates, Inc.	Alice Shorett	Derek Van Marter
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Meeting Support

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Jennifer Boles
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Observers

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Ron Crouse
	Jenny Barnett
	Dan Haas
	Mike Marxen
	Linda Watters
	Charles Houghten
U.S. Department of Energy	Dana Ward
	Alex Teimouri
	Tom Ferns
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Robert Burco (volunteer)
Senator Murray's Office	Shawn Bills
Yakama Nation	Jim Stephenson
BPA	Mary Hollen
Washington State Dept of Fish & Wildlife	Dave Ware
	Chuck Kohls

Benton County

Energy Northwest

Rattlesnake Mountain Observatory

Backcountry Horsemen of WA

Richland Rod and Gun Club

Public

Sergeant McIntosh

Max Benitz

Adam Fyall

Mot Hedges

Ken Swanson

Linda Smith

Eugene Van Liew

Maynard Plahuta

Larry Cadwell

Everett Hamilton

Kyleigh Hamilton

Dave Goeke

Roy Gephart

Merle Johnson

William Reclas

Murrel Dawson

DISTRIBUTED MATERIALS

Committee's Packet of Materials

Meeting Agenda (August 26, 2004)
Draft Meeting Summary: Session #18 (June 16-17, 2004)
Committee Advice Letter #9 (August 9, 2004)
USFWS Response Letter to Committee Advice #9 (August 25, 2004)
Refuge Update (May/June 2004)
Hanford Reach National Monument Wildlife Population Control

Distributed by Conservation/Environmental Seat

Presentation slides handout
Rattlesnake Hills Elk Herd Management Recommendations

Distributed During Public Comment by Benton County Commissioner Max Benitz

Benton County Board of Commissioners Resolution 04 397 Titled "In the Matter of Population Management of the Rattlesnake Hills Elk Herd"
Letter from Yakima County Board of Commissioners